

MERCHANDISING/PERSONAL CARE

Toothbrush makers step up marketing, R&D efforts

NEW YORK — A flurry of product and marketing activity is raising hopes for a revitalization of the toothbrush market in drug stores.

In late spring, for example, Global Ionics LLC launched the Ionic ProClean toothbrush. The product uses long-established ionic technology that has been proven to remove more plaque with less effort, according to a company spokeswoman.

Ionic ProClean was introduced "at a fraction of the price of comparable toothbrushes, making it an ideal product for recession-minded consumers who want a fresh-from-the-dentist feeling of clean," she says.

The product's ionic technology temporarily changes tooth enamel to a positive charge, which allows the force of polarity to loosen the bond of plaque

so that it can be gently swept away, she explains.

After rinsing the toothbrush under running water, the user touches a small silver strip on the handle and brushes normally. Touching the silver strip allows the body's natural energy to complete the circuit. A red light on the handle confirms that the circuit is complete and the ionic action is working.

"Scientists have known about the importance of polarity for a long time — it's a well-known phenomenon," says Global Ionics founder Ken Davidov. "And while this technology has been used in Asia and Europe for years, this is the first ionic toothbrush designed for the North American and worldwide market that neatly encases all the elements into one hermetically sealed brush, made from

soft materials that are comfortable to hold."

Dr. Scott Fine, a New York City dentist, notes: "Bacterial plaque causes tooth decay, gingivitis and other periodontal diseases, and some studies indicate a possible link to cardiac health. The Ionic ProClean can make an enormous difference in personal dental hygiene."

And there is the Colgate Wisp, a disposable mini-toothbrush with a breath-freshening bead. The product, which can be used without water or rinsing, has unique bristles designed to gently remove food and plaque from between teeth, according to manufacturer Colgate-Palmolive Co. Smaller than lipstick or a car key, the Wisp fits in a pocket or purse and is packaged in a portable case.

"We are very excited to announce this breakthrough innovation and offer consumers a convenient way to both clean and freshen their mouths on the go," Spencer Pingel of Colgate-Palmolive U.S. oral care said this



year. "Whether a consumer is looking to freshen [his or her] breath after a meal or to remove that filmy feeling after a cup of coffee, Colgate now offers the perfect portable, effective solution."

Brushing releases the liquid breath freshener (peppermint, spearmint or "cinnamint") in the bead. The suggested retail price is \$2.39 for a four-pack and \$7.99 for a 16-pack.

In the power brush segment, Church & Dwight Co. launched the \$15 SpinBrush Sonic. Advertisements for the product have noted that sonic toothbrushes can be priced at more than \$100, but the SpinBrush Sonic "offers sonic technology for a fraction of the cost."

Another sonic toothbrush priced in the under-\$20 range is Procter & Gamble Co.'s

(P&G's) Oral-B Vitality Sonic Rechargeable. P&G earlier this year encouraged people across the country to see the difference in their smile while making a difference in children's smiles worldwide by using Oral-B toothbrushes. For every purchase of Oral-B and Crest products, the company made a monetary and product donation to Operation Smile to help give new smiles to children in need.

A four-week study by dental health professionals at the University of Florida found that using Crest Pro-Health toothpaste and rinse with the Oral-B Vitality Precision Clean power toothbrush provided up to seven times better plaque removal than was achieved with a regular manual toothbrush and anticavity toothpaste, according to P&G.

MANUAL TOOTHBRUSHES

TOTAL DOLLAR SALES* \$443.3 mil. (-7.5%)

DRUG STORES \$156.4 mil. (-6.1%)

LEADING BRANDS**	Market share	Dollar sales (000)	Dollar sales % change
Colgate 360	8.3%	\$13,032	- 13.6%
Oral-B Advantage Plus	7.4%	11,523	+ 0.1%
Oral-B Indicator	6.8%	10,632	- 8.4%
Oral-B CrossAction	5.7%	8,841	- 28.2%
Oral-B Pulsar	4.2%	6,541	- 12.5%
Oral-B CrossAction Pro-Health	3.5%	5,443	+ 159.5%
Reach Advanced Design	3.2%	5,050	- 16.5%
Colgate WISP	3.0%	4,694	N/A
Oral-B Advantage Artica	2.7%	4,151	- 3.5%
Oral-B CrossAction Vitalizer	2.6%	4,036	- 43.6%

TOTAL UNIT SALES* 163.4 mil. (-7.8%)

DRUG STORES 51.9 mil. (-7.7%)

LEADING BRANDS**	Avg. price per unit	Unit sales (000)	Unit sales % change
Oral-B Indicator	\$3.32	3,203	- 16.2%
Colgate 360	4.50	2,896	- 19.0%
Oral-B Advantage Plus	4.43	2,604	- 10.1%
Colgate WISP	2.44	1,926	N/A
Oral-B CrossAction	4.92	1,798	- 32.4%
Reach Advanced Design	3.29	1,533	- 14.4%
Oral-B Advantage Artica	3.62	1,145	- 1.2%
Colgate Wave	2.57	1,039	- 24.9%
Oral-B CrossAction Pro-Health	5.63	966	+ 149.1%
Oral-B Advantage 123	3.48	936	—

*Total of drug stores, supermarkets and discount stores excluding Wal-Mart Stores Inc.
**In drug stores only. Private label products account for a 19.8% dollar share and a 30.4% unit share.

Source: Information Resources Inc.

For the 52 weeks ended July 12, 2009.

Children get some guidance

NEW YORK — Ashtel Dental's Brush Buddies talking toothbrush is an innovation in children's oral care, says chief executive officer Anish Patel.

The product features a dog character design and an amusing voice that Patel says children will enjoy.

"But we have designed this product to be more than just cute," he says.

Rather than focus strictly on entertainment, the audio played back through Brush Buddies educates youngsters and encourages healthy brushing habits. The voice recording plays for two minutes, letting children know the recommended brushing time. The audio also guides children to brush each section of their teeth, starting with the upper teeth.

PL offerings enhanced by Rite Aid

CAMP HILL, Pa. — Capitalizing on the appeal of store brands, Rite Aid Corp. this year launched the M5 Magnum five-blade shaving system.

The razor, which is billed as offering a comparable shave to leading brands, retails for \$6.99, or \$3 less than the comparable national brand. And purchasing the M5 Magnum's lower-cost replacement blades (at \$7.99) stretches the savings.

The M5 Magnum has five titanium-coated blades and a trim-

mer on the back of the cartridge for a more accurate cut on sideburns, on goatees and under the nose. The razor also features a larger soap bar, a longer-lasting lube strip with botanical oils, and a 90-degree trimming angle for premium performance. Comfort and ease of use are further enhanced by the M5 Magnum's ergonomic handle design with soft-grip raised ribs, which was preferred by consumers in side-by-side testing against leading name brands.

"The launch of the M5 Magnum underscores Rite Aid's commitment to providing our customers with high-quality products at up to 40% less than name brand equivalents," Bryan Shirliff, the chain's senior vice president of category management, commented in the spring.

"Consumers are ... realizing that they can experience the same premium performance with more cost-efficient private brand products."

POWER TOOTHBRUSHES

TOTAL DOLLAR SALES* \$222.3 mil. (-5.5%)

DRUG STORES \$85.2 mil. (-0.3%)

LEADING BRANDS**	Market share	Dollar sales (000)	Dollar sales % change
Oral-B Vitality	9.4%	\$8,021	- 8.7%
Sonicare Essence	8.9%	7,542	+ 14.3%
Crest SpinBrush Pro Clean	8.7%	7,374	+ 7.7%
Oral-B Pulsar	6.4%	5,420	- 14.5%
Crest SpinBrush Pro Whitening	5.9%	4,987	+ 23.5%
Oral-B CrossAction Power Max	5.8%	4,932	- 33.9%
Colgate 360	5.4%	4,595	+ 208.6%
Oral-B Professional Care	4.5%	3,836	- 5.9%
Sonicare FlexCare	4.2%	3,595	+ 872.3%
Oral-B Pulsar Pro-Health	3.8%	3,201	- 23.1%

TOTAL UNIT SALES* 23.8 mil. (-2.7%)

DRUG STORES 8.6 mil. (+0.5%)

LEADING BRANDS**	Avg. price per unit	Unit sales (000)	Unit sales % change
Crest SpinBrush Pro Clean	\$ 7.92	931	+ 1.76%
Oral-B Pulsar	6.00	904	- 16.3%
Crest SpinBrush Pro Whitening	7.32	681	+ 21.8%
Colgate 360	7.06	651	+ 162.4%
Oral-B CrossAction Power Max	7.69	641	- 44.3%
Oral-B Pulsar Pro-Health	6.54	489	- 27.0%
Oral-B Vitality	21.23	378	- 15.1%
Colgate Nickelodeon SpongeBob	6.68	297	+ 7.1%
Sonicare Essence	71.24	106	+ 32.0%
Crest SpinBrush Pro Recharge	19.61	95	- 20.9%

*Total of drug stores, supermarkets and discount stores excluding Wal-Mart Stores Inc.
**In drug stores only. Private label products account for a 2.4% dollar share and a 3.8% unit share.

Source: Information Resources Inc.

For the 52 weeks ended July 12, 2009.